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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 227151

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [GR](#)  
SUBJECT: FACT SHEET ON 17 NOVEMBER

11. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FACT SHEET ON THE REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION 17 NOVEMBER WHICH WAS RELEASED PUBLICLY ON JULY 6. COPIES OF THE FACT SHEET BEING POUCHED TO POST ALSO INCLUDE TWO CHARTS DEPICTING THE NUMBERS OF TERRORIST ATTACKS BY YEAR FROM 1975-86, AND THE TYPES OF TARGETS FOR THESE ATTACKS (US MILITARY, US DIPLOMATS GREEK POLICE, GREEK BUSINESSMEN, ETC.)

12. BEGIN TEXT.

ACTIVE AND LETHAL

GREECE'S "REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION 17 NOVEMBER" IS PRESENTLY ONE OF THE MORE ACTIVE AND LETHAL TERRORIST

GROUPS TARGETTING AMERICANS IN WESTERN EUROPE. AND FREQUENTLY ATTACKS GREEK CITIZENS AS WELL. SUCCESSIVE GREEK GOVERNMENTS HAVE YET TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN APPREHENDING ANY MEMBER OF THE GROUP.

SINCE ITS INITIAL APPEARANCE WITH THE DECEMBER 1975 ASSASSINATION OF U.S. DIPLOMAT RICHARD WELCH IN ATHENS, THE GROUP HAS CARRIED OUT 29 ATTACKS -- ALL IN ATHENS. SEVEN OF THESE ATTACKS HAVE BEEN AGAINST U.S. TARGETS IN WHICH 17 NOVEMBER KILLED THREE AMERICANS, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR TWO ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATIONS, AND INJURED 26 AMERICANS IN THE BOMBINGS OF TWO MILITARY BUSES.

FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES, MULTIPLE BUT RELATED ATTACKS -- SUCH AS THE FEBRUARY 1989 BOMBINGS OF THREE UNOCCUPIED RESIDENCES -- ARE COUNTED AS SEPARATE INCIDENTS.

VERY LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT THE GROUP'S MEMBERSHIP, ITS INTERNAL DYNAMICS, OR ITS OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES. SINCE 1975, 17 NOVEMBER HAS AVERAGED JUST OVER TWO ATTACKS A YEAR MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE GROUP EXCEPT THROUGH ITS COMMUNIQUEES AND ITS CHOICE OF TARGETS.

NEW TACTICS AND TARGETTING

FOLLOWING THE FEBRUARY 21, 1985 ASSASSINATION OF GREEK PUBLISHER NIKOS MOMFERATOS, 17 NOVEMBER MOVED INTO A NEW OPERATIONAL PHASE. WHILE THERE WERE ONLY FIVE ATTACKS IN THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE (THREE OF THESE AGAINST AMERICANS), THE SECOND AND CURRENT PHASE IS CHARACTERIZED BY A HIGHER LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION AS WELL AS AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER AND LETHALITY OF ATTACKS.

IN THIS SECOND PHASE, 17 NOVEMBER HAS CARRIED OUT 24 ATTACKS, KILLING SEVEN PEOPLE AND INJURING 43, INCLUDING ITS LATEST ATTACK, THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER GEORGE PETSOS ON MAY 8, 1989 IN WHICH PETSOS AND TWO BODY GUARDS WERE WOUNDED. THIS PERIOD OF JUST OVER FOUR YEARS ACCOUNTS FOR 83 PERCENT OF THE GROUP'S OPERATIONS SINCE ITS FIRST APPEARANCE IN 1975.

ALTHOUGH 17 NOVEMBER CARRIED OUT NO BOMBINGS DURING ITS FIRST PHASE, THE GROUP HAS CARRIED OUT 16 BOMBINGS AND TWO ATTEMPTED BOMBINGS IN ITS SECOND PHASE, INCLUDING FIVE REMOTE- AND ONE WIRE-DETONATED BOMB ATTACKS (FOUR OF THESE BEING DIRECTED AGAINST U.S. TARGETS). THESE BOMBINGS RESULTED IN TWO DEATHS AND 43 INJURIES

(INCLUDING ONE U.S. MILITARY OFFICER DEAD AND 26 OTHER AMERICANS INJURED).

ALSO DURING THIS PERIOD, 17 NOVEMBER ASSASSINATED TWO GREEK INDUSTRIALISTS, CARRIED OUT THREE ARMED ASSAULTS/KNEE-CAPPINGS, AND SEIZED A SUBURBAN POLICE STATION, MAKING OFF WITH A SMALL ARSENAL OF WEAPONS. THE INCREASE IN TERRORIST ATTACKS MAY BE ATTRIBUTED IN PART TO THE RECRUITMENT OF NEW AND YOUNGER MEMBERS WHO HAVE CONVINCED THE LEADERSHIP THAT THE GROUP'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED BY PERIODIC ASSASSINATIONS ONLY.

DESPITE THIS INCREASE IN TERRORIST ACTIVITY, 17 NOVEMBER APPEARS TO BE LIMITED IN THE NUMBER OF ATTACKS IT CAN CARRY OUT IN ANY GIVEN YEAR. MORE ATTACKS WOULD MEAN EXPANDING THE SIZE OF THE ORGANIZATION, WHICH COULD RUN THE RISK OF COMPROMISING ITS INTERNAL SECURITY. SINCE 17 NOVEMBER IS BELIEVED TO BE A SINGLE TERRORIST ENTITY RATHER THAN A GROUP COMPRISED OF MANY OPERATIONAL CELLS, IT CANNOT CARRY OUT AS MANY ATTACKS AS A LARGER GROUP. THIS LIMITS THE GROUP'S POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AS THE MORE ATTACKS IT CARRIES OUT, THE GREATER THE CHANCES OF IT BEING CAUGHT.

#### SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY

17 NOVEMBER'S RECENT USE OF REMOTE-CONTROLLED EXPLOSIVES INCREASES THE SERIOUS SECURITY CONCERN IT POSES FOR BOTH GREEKS AND AMERICANS. THE NOVEMBER 26, 1985 ATTACK ON A GREEK POLICE BUS TRANSPORTING (MAT) RIOT POLICEMEN WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE GROUP USED SUCH A DEVICE, WOUNDING THIRTEEN OF THE 22 POLICEMEN ON BOARD. ONE OF WHOM LATER DIED OF HIS WOUNDS. A REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB WAS USED IN THE ASSASSINATION OF THE U.S. DEFENSE ATTACHE, NAVY CAPTAIN WILLIAM NORDEEN, ON JUNE 28, 1988. MOST RECENTLY, ANOTHER REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB INJURED FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER GEORGE PETSOS AND TWO BODY GUARDS ON MAY 8, 1989.

WITH THE USE OF REMOTELY-CONTROLLED EXPLOSIVES, 17 NOVEMBER HAS BECOME A HIGHLY LETHAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. THESE DEVICES ARE PROVEN CAPABLE OF CAUSING MAJOR DESTRUCTION, EVEN AGAINST ARMORED VEHICLES, THUS RENDERING PROTECTIVE DEFENSES INADEQUATE. THE AUGUST 1988 ATTACK ON A SUBURBAN POLICE STATION DEMONSTRATES THAT 17 NOVEMBER IS CAPABLE OF MOUNTING A SOPHISTICATED TERRORIST ATTACK USING SEVERAL OPERATIVES AGAINST A SECURE SITE. THE ATTACK NETTED THE GROUP ADDITIONAL HIGH-POWERED WEAPONRY WHICH MIGHT BE USED IN FUTURE LETHAL ATTACKS.

#### BACKGROUND AND IDEOLOGY

THE GROUP TAKES ITS NAME FROM THE DATE IN 1973 WHEN THE GREEK JUNTA SENT RIOT POLICE BACKED BY TANKS INTO THE ATHENS POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE TO STOP AN OCCUPATION BY STUDENTS DEMANDING AN END TO MILITARY RULE. AT LEAST 20 PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND 200 PEOPLE WERE INJURED IN THE INCIDENT. THIS EVENT GALVANIZED PUBLIC DISSATISFACTION WITH THE MILITARY REGIME AND SERVED AS A PRELUDE FOR A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT EVENTUALLY LED TO ITS DOWNFALL IN JULY 1974. ITS COMMUNIQUE OVER THE YEARS SHOW 17 NOVEMBER TO BE A VIOLENT MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANIZATION THAT IS DOCTRINALLY ANTI-CAPITALIST, ANTI-U.S. AND ANTI-NATO.

THE GROUP HAS ALSO BEEN VERY CRITICAL OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT FOR NOT ADDRESSING A NUMBER OF ISSUES THAT IT VIEWS AS INIMICAL TO GREEK INTERESTS, SUCH AS THE SITUATION IN CYPRUS, THE GREECE-TURKEY RAPPROACHMENT, THE PRESENCE OF U.S. BASES, AND GREEK MEMBERSHIP IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO) AND THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (EC). 17 NOVEMBER ALSO VIEWS ITSELF AS THE "VANGUARD OF THE WORKING CLASS." IT IS QUICK TO REACT TO DOMESTIC ISSUES -- TAXES, LABOR,

HIGH MEDICAL COSTS -- WHICH ARE OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN TO THE GREEK PEOPLE. FOR THESE REASONS, NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF ITS ATTACKS HAVE BEEN AGAINST GREEK TARGETS.

#### ORGANIZATION

17 NOVEMBER'S ORGANIZATION MAY BE SIMILAR TO OTHER LEFT-WING EUROPEAN TERRORIST GROUPS SUCH AS WEST GERMANY'S RED ARMY FACTION (RAF) AND FRANCE'S ACTION DIRECT (AD). IT IS A SMALL, HIGHLY-DISCIPLINED GROUP WHOSE "HARD CORE" MEMBERS PROBABLY NUMBER NO MORE THAN 20 PEOPLE. IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE, BUT JUDGING FROM SIMILAR RADICAL GROUPS IN WEST EUROPE, THEY ARE PROBABLY COLLECTIVE.

THE GROUP'S HARD CORE MEMBERS MAY HAVE BEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS DURING THE 1970'S IN GREECE, AND POSSIBLY WERE INVOLVED IN THE CAMPUS ACTIVITY THAT HELPED BRING ABOUT

THE FALL OF THE MILITARY JUNTA. TODAY, THIS HARD CORE WOULD HAVE REACHED THEIR LATE 30'S AND EARLY 40'S, SOME COULD EVEN BE HOLDING PROFESSIONAL JOBS SUCH AS LAWYERS, JOURNALISTS AND TEACHERS. IF THESE MEMBERS ARE INDEED "PART-TIME" TERRORISTS (AS OPPOSED TO TERRORISTS WHO LIVE TOTALLY UNDERGROUND), IT WOULD ENHANCE THE VEIL OF SECRECY OVER 17 NOVEMBER'S ORGANIZATION.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF TIES TO FOREIGN TERRORIST GROUPS, 17 NOVEMBER MAY BE AFFILIATED WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE (ELA), BELIEVED TO BE A LOOSE COALITION OF VIOLENT, EXTREME LEFTIST GROUPS IN GREECE.

#### FUTURE PROSPECTS

IN CONTRAST TO OTHER WEST EUROPEAN TERRORIST GROUPS, 17 NOVEMBER HAS NEVER TARGETED A CURRENT HIGH-RANKING GREEK GOVERNMENT OR MILITARY OFFICIAL, ALTHOUGH IT DID ATTEMPT TO KILL A FORMER PUBLIC ORDER MINISTER. THE GROUP MAY FEEL THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIGHT FOR AN ATTACK ON A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GOVERNING SYSTEM AND THAT IT IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND THE REPERCUSSIONS THAT WOULD FOLLOW. 17 NOVEMBER HAS ALSO NEVER CARRIED OUT AN ATTACK AGAINST NON-OFFICIAL AMERICANS OR THEIR OFFICES, WHETHER TOURISTS OR BUSINESSMEN, NOR HAS IT PROMINENTLY MENTIONED A U.S. COMPANY IN ITS COMMUNIQUE -- PERHAPS INDICATING THAT TARGETING U.S. FIRMS IS NOT CURRENTLY A HIGH PRIORITY, ALTHOUGH THIS TOO COULD CHANGE.

THE SERIOUS THREAT BY 17 NOVEMBER TO OFFICIAL U.S. PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES IN GREECE, HOWEVER, CONTINUES UNCHECKED. IN THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF ITS COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING THE JUNE 1988 ASSASSINATION OF CAPTAIN NORDEEN, 17 NOVEMBER RATIONALIZED ITS ACTIONS SAYING THAT AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES IN THE COUNTRY WERE AN OCCUPATION FORCE, AND: WE ARE GOING TO HIT ANYBODY WHO IS A MEMBER OF IT OR AN AGENT OF ITS SECRET SERVICES. THESE ACTIONS ARE GOING TO CONTINUE AND ARE GOING TO INCREASE UNTIL THE LAST TURKISH SOLDIER LEAVES CYPRUS AND THE LAST AMERICAN SOLDIER LEAVES OUR COUNTRY.

#### 17 NOVEMBER CHRONOLOGY OF ATTACKS IN ATHENS

1976

DECEMBER 23	THE REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION 17 NOVEMBER, A PREVIOUSLY  UNKNOWN GROUP, CLAIMED CREDIT FOR ASSASSINATING U.S. DIPLOMAT RICHARD WELCH OUTSIDE HIS HOME.
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1976

DECEMBER 14	EVANGELOS MALLIOS, A FORMER POLICE CAPTAIN DURING THE GREEK MILITARY JUNTA (1967-74), WAS
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SHOT AND FATALLY WOUNDED BY A  
LONE GUNMAN WHILE WALKING HOME,  
DYING FOUR HOURS LATER IN  
SURGERY.

1980

JANUARY 16 MAJOR GENERAL PANTELIS PETROU,  
DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE ATHENS  
RIOT POLICE (MAT) AND FORMER  
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER DURING THE  
GREEK MILITARY JUNTA, AND HIS  
DRIVER WERE SHOT AND KILLED  
WHILE DRIVING HOME FROM WORK  
AFTER THREE MEN IN A CAR FORCED  
PETROU'S CAR TO STOP.

1983

NOVEMBER 15 U.S. NAVY CAPTAIN GEORGE TSANTES  
AND HIS GREEK DRIVER NIKOLAOS  
VELOUTSOS WERE SHOT AND KILLED  
WHEN TSANTES' CAR WAS STOPPED AT  
A TRAFFIC LIGHT. TWO MEN ON A  
MOTOCYCLE PULLED ALONGSIDE  
TSANTES'S CAR AND SHOT BOTH MEN.

1984

APRIL 3 U.S. ARMY MASTER SERGEANT ROBERT  
J. JUDD, JR. WAS ATTACKED BY TWO  
MEN ON A MOTORCYCLE WHILE  
STOPPED AT A TRAFFIC LIGHT. THE  
ATTACKERS HAD PULLED UP  
ALONGSIDE JUDD'S CAR AND FIRED  
FIVE ROUNDS AT HIM. JUDD WAS  
ABLE TO TAKE EVASIVE ACTION AND  
ESCAPED WITH ONLY MINOR INJURIES.

1985

FEBRUARY 21 NIKOS MOMFERATOS, PUBLISHER OF  
GREECE'S LARGEST CONSERVATIVE  
NEWSPAPER APOGEVMATINI  
(AFTERNOONER), AND HIS DRIVER  
WERE SHOT AND KILLED BY TWO  
GUNMEN WHO OPENED FIRE AS  
MOMFERATOS. CAR SLOWED DOWN TO  
MAKE A LEFT TURN.

NOVEMBER 26 THIRTEEN (MAT) RIOT POLICEMEN  
WERE INJURED, ONE LATER DIED, AS  
A POWERFUL CAR BOMB EXPLODED AS  
THEIR POLICE BUS PASSED BY.

1986

APRIL 8 DEMITRIOS ANGELOPOULOS A GREEK  
STEEL MAGNATE, WAS SHOT AND  
KILLED BY A LONE GUNMAN WHILE  
WALKING TO WORK.

OCTOBER 5 FOUR SEPARATE GOVERNMENT TAX  
OFFICES LOCATED AROUND ATHENS  
WERE BOMBED IN THE EARLY MORNING  
HOURS. NO ONE WAS HURT IN THE  
EXPLOSIONS.

1987

FEBRUARY 4 DR. ZACHARIAS KAPSALAKIS, WHO  
WAS LEAVING HIS OFFICE WITH HIS  
WIFE, WAS ATTACKED BY TWO MEN  
WHO APPROACHED AND SHOT HIM  
SEVERAL TIMES IN THE STOMACH AND  
LEGS. (THIS ATTACK MARKED A  
DEPARTURE FROM PAST 17 NOVEMBER  
ARMED ASSAULTS SINCE THE VICTIM

PURPOSELY WAS NOT KILLED.)

APRIL 24 SIXTEEN AMERICANS AND TWO GREEK  
CITIZENS WERE INJURED WHEN A  
BOMB EXPLODED IN FRONT OF A  
MILITARY BUS CARRYING U.S.  
SERVICEMEN.

AUGUST 10 TEN AMERICANS AND TWO GREEK  
  
CITIZENS WERE INJURED WHEN A CAR  
BOMB EXPLODED AS A U.S. MILITARY  
BUS PASSED BY.

1988

JANUARY 22 AN ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE A DEA  
AGENT IN ATHENS WITH A  
REMOTE-DETONATED BOMB  
FAILED WHEN THE TERRORIST  
RESPONSIBLE FOR DETONATING THE  
DEVICE WAS FRIGHTENED OFF BY A  
PASSER-BY.

MARCH 1 GREEK INDUSTRIALIST ALEXANDROS  
ATHANASIADIS WAS SHOT AND  
FATALLY WOUNDED BY AN ASSASSIN  
ON A MOTORCYCLE.

MAY 23 ATTEMPTS TO ASSASSINATE FOUR  
TURKISH DIPLOMATS WITH BOMBS  
PLACED UNDER THEIR CARS FAILED.  
TWO OF THE BOMBS EXPLODED WITH  
NO CASUALTIES, WHILE TWO OTHERS  
WERE DISCOVERED AND DESTROYED.

JUNE 28 THE U.S. DEFENSE ATTACHE, NAVY  
CAPTAIN WILLIAM NORDEEN, WAS  
ASSASSINATED IN A  
REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB  
EXPLOSION.

AUGUST 15 AN ATHENS SUBURBAN POLICE  
STATION WAS SEIZED BY 17  
NOVEMBER TERRORISTS. THE POLICE  
OFFICERS WERE TIED UP AND A  
SMALL ARSENAL OF WEAPONS WERE  
TAKEN.

1989

JANUARY 10 17 NOVEMBER CLAIMED CREDIT FOR  
SEPARATE

JANUARY 18 SHOOTING ATTACKS WHICH WOUNDED  
TWO GOVERNMENT PROSECUTORS, ONE  
OF WHOM LATER DIED FROM  
COMPLICATIONS STEMMING FROM HIS  
INJURIES. (A THIRD GOVERNMENT  
PROSECUTOR WAS KILLED LATER IN

JANUARY BY THE 1ST OF MAY GROUP,  
WHICH MAY BE LINKED TO 17  
NOVEMBER.)

FEBRUARY 22 THREE UNOCCUPIED RESIDENCES WERE  
BOMBED TO CALL ATTENTION TO HIGH  
HOUSING COSTS.

MAY 8 FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER  
GEORGE PETSOS, ALONG WITH TWO  
BODY GUARDS, WERE INJURED IN A  
REMOTE-DETONATED CAR BOMB  
EXPLOSION.

//END//

THE OFFICE OF THE COORDINATOR FOR  
COUNTER-TERRORISM APPRECIATES THE ASSISTANCE OF

THE THREAT ANALYSIS DIVISION OF THE BUREAU OF  
DIPLOMATIC SECURITY WHICH COMPILED THIS  
REPORT. END OF TEXT. BAKER

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